

BILL SUMMARY

UNITED NATIONS TRANSPARENCY, ACCOUNTABILITY, AND REFORM ACT OF 2011

Title I – Funding of the United Nations: States the policy of the U.S. to pursue shifting the UN regular budget to a voluntary basis (rather than the current assessed basis). This will allow the U.S. to fund only UN agencies and programs that advance U.S. interests and values, and the resulting competition among UN entities for funding will likely make those entities more transparent, accountable, and effective. This title gives the UN two years after this bill's enactment date to phase in this reform before the U.S. is required to withhold funds. However, after two years, should less than 80% of the UN regular budget be funded on a voluntary basis, then the U.S. shall, until the 80% threshold is met, withhold 50% of its non-voluntary regular budget contributions assessed by the UN. Note that this creates a sliding incentive scale, not an “all-or-nothing” sanction: The more the UN makes its regular budget voluntary, the less we withhold, up until the UN hits 80% voluntary funding, at which point there would be no withholdings.

Title II – Transparency and Accountability for U.S. Contributions to the United Nations: Authorizes the Comptroller General (head of the Government Accountability Office) to investigate and audit the use of U.S. contributions to the UN, and makes funding of UN entities contingent upon their providing the CG with written pledges to cooperate in sharing basic oversight information with the CG and Congress and to operate in a fully accountable manner (including by taking a number of specific measures to ensure accountability), and complying with those pledges. Also protects Congress's role in determining funding levels to UN entities, by prohibiting U.S. contributions to the UN from being used for any purpose other than the specific purposes for which it was made available by Congress (for example, funds made available for assessed contributions could not be used for voluntary contributions and vice versa). Also makes it U.S. policy to seek repayment to the U.S. Treasury of any overpayments made to any UN entity, and to seek reform of the UN Tax Equalization Fund.

Title III – U.S. Policy at the United Nations: States U.S. policy on various issues relating to the UN (e.g., transparency, reform, Security Council expansion, terrorism, anti-Semitism, treatment of Israel) and requires reports from the State Department on UN reform and personnel practices.

Title IV – Status of Palestinian Entities at the United Nations: Opposes efforts by the Palestinian leadership to evade a negotiated settlement with Israel and undermine opportunities for peace by seeking de facto recognition of a Palestinian state by the UN (through gaining membership for “Palestine” in UN agencies or programs). Withholds U.S. contributions from any UN agency or program that upgrades the status of the PLO/Palestinian observer mission.

Title V – United Nations Human Rights Council: States that the U.S. may not run for a seat on the Council, and must withhold a proportionate share of our UN regular budget contribution equal to our proportion of Council funding, until State can certify that the Council does not include Members: subject to Security Council sanctions; under Security Council-mandated human rights investigation; that are state sponsors of terrorism; or that are “countries of particular concern” for religious freedom violations.

Title VI – Goldstone Report: Declares it is U.S. policy to lead a high-level diplomatic campaign calling for the UN to revoke and repudiate the Goldstone Report, which falsely accused Israel of deliberately attacking Palestinian civilians during Operation Cast Lead. Would also withhold U.S. funding from the Goldstone Report and its preparatory and follow-on measures. Also declares it is U.S. policy to strongly and unequivocally oppose any consideration, legitimization, or support of the Goldstone Report, or measures stemming from the report, in international organizations, and to encourage other nations to repudiate the report.

Title VII – Durban Process: Withholds U.S. funding from any part of the UN's irreparably flawed Durban process (including the upcoming Durban 3 meeting), which was supposed to fight racism and bigotry, but which has been hijacked by rogue regimes and used to advance an anti-Israel, anti-Semitic, anti-Western, anti-freedom agenda. Supports the decision of the U.S. and other countries to not participate in the Durban 2 and 3 conferences. States that it is U.S. policy to lead a high-level diplomatic campaign to encourage other countries not to participate in, fund, or legitimize any part of the Durban process, and to develop credible alternative forums to fight racism and bigotry. Prohibits funding for U.S. participation in the Durban 3 meeting or any other part of the Durban process.

Title VIII – UNRWA: Prohibits U.S. funding to the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, which aids Palestinian refugees. Despite failing to meet the requirements under U.S. law to obtain assistance, UNRWA has received about \$500 million in FY 2009 and 2010 alone, with over \$230 million in further funding included in the Administration's FY 2012 budget request. The prohibition on funding would remain until UNRWA: vets its staff and aid recipients via U.S. watch lists for ties to Foreign Terrorist Organizations; stops engaging in anti-Israel propaganda and politicized activities; improves its accountability and transparency; and stops banking with financial institutions under U.S. designation for terror financing or money laundering.

Title IX – International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA): Directs the U.S. Permanent Representative to the IAEA to advance a number of reforms at the organization, including measures to strengthen the IAEA's ability to monitor member states' compliance with their obligations and ensure that states not in compliance do not receive nuclear-related assistance from the IAEA or other countries. Withholds U.S. funding from the IAEA in proportion to the amount the IAEA spends on technical assistance to state sponsors of terrorism, like Iran and Syria.

Title X – Peacekeeping: Calls for far-reaching reforms in the areas of planning, management, conduct and accountability in UN peacekeeping, and mandates U.S. opposition to new or expanded peacekeeping missions until the most critical, but immediately achievable, reforms are instituted (subject to a Presidential waiver based on vital U.S. national security interests or to prevent genocide or other widespread loss of human life). States it is U.S. policy to promote the conduct of independent, annual audits of each peacekeeping operation to guarantee that all missions are efficient and cost effective. Promotes the review of all peacekeeping operation mandates with a view toward identifying objectives that are practical and achievable. Addresses misconduct and sexual exploitation by personnel associated with peacekeeping missions by supporting the introduction of pre-deployment training, the adoption of a code of conduct, and the establishment of an investigative body to probe allegations of wrongdoing.